

## ELECTRIC UTILITY TRADES APPRENTICESHIP ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Monday, April 22, 2013

Western Technical College  
Mauston, Wisconsin

### DRAFT MINUTES

<b><u>Members Present</u></b>	<b><u>Employer/Organization</u></b>
Ardelt, Bruce	Oakdale Electric
Chartier, Chris	WI Public Power Cooperative
Christopherson, Gary (Co-Chair)	Dairyland Power
Howard, Todd	Chippewa Valley Electric Coop
Jeske, Ken	WE Energies
Kumm, Nicolas	Marshfield Utilities
Lukasavitz, Craig	IBEW Local 1250
Muench, Mark	Alliant Energy
Trussoni, Bob	Marshfield Utilities
<b><u>Members Absent</u></b>	<b><u>Employer/Organization</u></b>
Blenka, Al	Dairyland Power Cooperative
Diehl, Leo	Rice Lake Utilities
Lorenz, Jim	Madison Gas & Electric Co.
Wicklund, Rick	Sun Prairie Utilities
<b><u>Consultants &amp; Guests</u></b>	<b><u>Employer/Organization</u></b>
Ferguson, Bill	Alliant Energy
Kiel, Todd	NWTC, Green Bay
Larson, Randy	CVTC, Eau Claire
Morgan, Karen	BAS, Director
O'Sullivan, Kathy	Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards (BAS)
Schaendter, Jim	MSTC-WI Rapids
Smith, Owen	BAS

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1. The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. by Gary Christopherson, Co-chair, in conformity with the Wisconsin Open Meeting Law.
  2. A sign-in sheet was circulated to record those in attendance.
  3. Minutes of the April 30, 2012 meeting were approved as written.

#### **4. Old Business**

a) **New members** Nick Kumm and Bruce Ardelt introduced themselves and were welcomed by participants.

b) **Sage Update**

- End Date: SAGE concludes June 30, 2013.
- SAGE Personnel Change: The new grant manager is Palle Pedersen. Palle will close out the grant, including the budget and supportive services. Becky Haug will close out the purchasing of training items.
- Journey Worker Upgrade Sessions: Owen Smith reminded the technical colleges that, as a condition of receiving SAGE funds, they are expected by BAS to make at least some of the training items (curriculum, equipment, supplies) available to journey workers via upgrade sessions until the grant ends.
- Supportive Services for income eligible apprentices and journey workers will be available until May 31.

#### **5. New Business**

a) **Review/Approve Substation Electrician Job Book**

- Karen Morgan explained that the purposes of the focus group are to determine the occupational competencies and tasks that indicate successful performance of each, i.e. what the apprentice would demonstrate to the supervising skilled worker. The Wisconsin program is currently the only hybrid-term Substation Electrician program in the nation, so BAS will submit the job book to the Dept of Labor for federal approval, which would make it the nationwide standard. Karen suggested that the focus group discuss whether to include interim credentials in the program.
- As a result of this discussion, the focus group will move up its timeline, and Alliant Energy will join the group.

b) **New Employee Member Needed**

- Owen Smith reported that the committee needs an additional employee member. Members suggest BAS contact Eric Miller or Mike Pederson from Kaukauna Utilities, or Oconomowoc Utilities
- As a result of this discussion, BAS will contact the skilled workers suggested by the committee.

c) **2014 Apprenticeship Conference**

Karen Morgan distributed the "Call for Conference Workshop Proposals for Wisconsin's 26<sup>th</sup> Biennial Apprenticeship Conference." The theme of the Conference is "The Apprenticeship Solution: Meeting the Challenge."

The four broad workshop tracks are:

1. Challenge of a Changing Workforce – Potential topics:
  - Population shortages
  - Worker & Skill shortages
  - Generational Differences
  - Technology
2. Challenge of Partnership in Workforce Development – Potential topics:
  - Introductory "101" workshops to help audience understand more about a program, such as Apprenticeship, WIA, Youth Apprenticeship, DPI, WTCS
  - Continuation of Collaborate for Success Initiative
3. Challenge of Regulation and Policy – Potential topics:
  - Apprenticeship Regulations
  - Child Labor Laws
  - UI Benefits (apprentice and sponsor perspective)
  - Licensing (Barbering & Cosmetology, Electrical, Plumbing, etc.)
4. Challenge of Awareness & Outreach – Potential topics:
  - Working with the K-12 System
  - Recruitment of Apprenticeship Sponsors

Attendance at the 26<sup>th</sup> Biennial Apprenticeship Conference will include the 1) Workforce Development community which includes Workforce Development Boards, Community Based Organizations, WIA Service Providers, Job Service employees, and Economic Support; the 2) Education Community including K-12 teachers, principals, counselors, board members and Wisconsin Technical College System employees, and 3) the Apprenticeship Community including employers, members of employer associations, labor and employees.

DWD Secretary Newson asked BAS to broaden the scope of the 2014 Conference to include a greater variety of topics, audiences and speakers. Karen asked committee members to contact her with suggestions for topics and workshops. The deadline for submissions is June 3.

As a result of this discussion, the item will be added to the agenda for the fall meeting.

#### **d) Outreach Update**

- Outreach Campaign to Manufacturing was launched by BAS in April. The campaign targets the industrial sector which has frequently cited a skills gap and lack of qualified workers and, like the construction sector, will soon face the retirement of much of the 65-year-old workforce without a sufficient population turning 18, the earliest age of an entry-level worker. The campaign call-to-action encourages more manufacturers to invest in the future of their unskilled workers by training them through the apprenticeship program rather than through skill-specific boot camps.

- Outreach Campaign to K-12: Through the Advisory Council, BAS developed a series of brochures on the educational value of an apprenticeship and careers in the skilled trades; target audiences include students, parents, teachers and technical colleges. The material was included in a mass mailing by the Department of Public Instruction to superintendents and heads of the school boards. The Bureau is awaiting feedback from the mailing.

The campaign includes the following: “Get your degree in doing” billboards in Green Bay, Madison, Milwaukee and Wausau; and a public service announcement emphasizing the value of an education in the skilled trades not just a four-year degree; three videos on the value of apprenticeship training; news events with Secretary Newson; news releases posters; post cards; flash drives; and adhesive cloths to wipe smart phones.

## **6. WTCS Update:**

### **a. Chippewa Valley Technical College**

- Randy Larson reported that the college appreciates the new curriculum and training supplies funded through the SAGE grant.
- One utility approached the college about developing a Utility Technician apprenticeship. The occupation would assist Linemen and Groundmen, and offer a career ladder into the Groundman occupation. The discussion was a brainstorming session only.

### **b. Mid-state Technical College**

- Nothing to report.

### **c. Northeast Wisconsin Technical College**

- Todd Kiel reported that the college is transitioning from a 17 week to 15 week semester, which would better align with four-year colleges and be more convenient for credit-takers. As part of the transition, the school is preparing the Substation Electrician schedule for the next few years rather than per semester.
- The college might have enough apprentices enrolled in the new Electric Line Worker program to begin a class this fall, but the instructor assignment is pending. The ELW classes would be held one day every other week rather than in a block.

### **d. Discussion on Online Related Instruction**

- Kathy O’Sullivan reported that the local Joint Apprenticeship Committee is apprehensive about online delivery of paid related instruction, but is in favor of a piloting some online content, if the committee has input on the content and delivery method. Parts of the apprenticeship community are apprehensive about online delivery because it feels like push from the technical colleges at a cost of value to the apprenticeship program.
- Randy Larson shared ideas for content that could possibly be delivered effectively online: National Electric Safety Code; and State Electric Code.
- Jim Cook stated that the biggest push for online delivery is from students, and cautioned members not to dismiss online delivery because it can be done very well.
- Karen Morgan stated that the Bureau raised the topic at the meeting to keep the committee informed, not to ask for input or a decision. Karen added that the value of

- apprentices networking face to face is very high, because they are typically isolated from each other on the job site. The new Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator program is offered entirely online and tied to an associate's degree, and so far no employers have favored that approach.
- Craig Lukasavitz stated that online delivery might be a hard sell to some Substation Electrician sponsors because they already oppose the cost of face-to-face delivery.
  - Todd Kiel and Jim Cook cautioned members about jumping to conclusions because Chippewa Valley is discussing whether to create blended curriculum, not move all instruction to online delivery; and that online content can be delivered very effectively. Furthermore, the biggest push for online delivery is from the students.
  - As a result of this discussion, the committee decided to table further discussion pending a pilot program.

#### **7. Review of Program Participants**

- Two-hundred sixty-eight apprentices and 74 employers are currently participating in the apprenticeship programs underneath this committee. The apprentice total decreased from 285 apprentices in spring 2012, and is the lowest total since spring 2008.
- Owen Smith asked committee members to consider additional data and graphical presentations that would help members comprehend the state of the programs and make more informed decisions. BAS will acquire new reporting software this summer that be capable of presenting more data in more ways. For example, BAS will bring to the fall meeting a line graph of annual employer totals from 2000 – 2013.

**8. The next meeting** is tentatively scheduled for Friday, October 18, 2013, 10:00 a.m., at Western Technical College in Mauston.

**9. The meeting was adjourned** at 1:30 p.m.

*Submitted by Owen Smith, Recorder*